

NSC review completed

U.S. National Security Strategy

PART III
Military Component

Section E
General Purpose Forces

III

~~TOP SECRET~~

NSSD 1-82, PART III, SECTION E

NSC review completed

General Purpose ForcesSummary

Force Application. In conflicts not involving the USSR, the US will rely primarily upon indigenous forces to protect mutual interests, with US assistance as appropriate. US conventional forces should have the capability of meeting Soviet threats. In either set of contingencies, the US is particularly dependent upon the assistance of friends and allies. Because the Reserve Component is an integral part of US capabilities, mobilization planning must be included in preparations for non-Soviet as well as Soviet contingencies. Where quick termination of conflict cannot be assured, the US must confront adversaries with the prospect of a prolonged, costly, and ultimately unwinnable war.

Strategy. We seek two fundamental objectives in peacetime: to deter military attack against the US, its allies, and friends; and to contain and reverse the expansion of Soviet influence worldwide. These objectives require the US to increase its influence worldwide through the maintenance and improvement of forward deployed forces and rapidly deployable US-based forces, together with periodic exercises, security assistance, and special operations.

Current forces are adequate to maintain most peacetime forward deployments and to respond to minor crises and non-Soviet conflicts. However, major risks would exist in direct conflict with the Soviet Union. In a multi-theater war, lesser-scale operations will be required in secondary theaters.

In the event of direct Soviet aggression, if deterrence fails, our military strategy is to deploy military forces rapidly to the area to signal US commitment and to deter further aggression. If this action does not deter further aggression, US forces will conduct military operations in conjunction with regional allies with the aim of halting Soviet aggression. We will also take those steps necessary to prepare for the possibility of a global US-Soviet conflict and, if necessary, execute counteroffensives at other fronts or places where we can affect the outcome of the war.

Force Development. In order to close the gap between strategy and capabilities, the US must undertake a major and balanced force development program throughout the decade. This program involves major improvements in readiness, command/control/communications systems, sustainability, mobility, and essential modernization. While specific priorities among the type of general purpose forces and among these categories of expenditures overlap in an often complex manner, general order of priority will be given to improvements of forward deployed forces, forces providing flexibility in deployment, such as the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, other units earmarked for earliest deployment, and associated lift forces. Some force expansion is also planned for mobility forces, general purpose naval forces, and tactical air forces. Consideration should also be given to land force expansion.

TOP SECRET

Review April 22, 2002

Classified & Extended by William P. Clark

Reason for Extension: NSC 1.13(e)

TOP SECRET

End of Summary

~~TOP SECRET~~TOP SECRETNSSD 1-82, PART III, SECTION EGENERAL PURPOSE FORCESFORCE APPLICATIONPolicies for General Purpose ForcesConventional Force Objectives

Peacetime. In peacetime, general purpose forces serve US policy objectives by deterring aggression against the US and its friends and allies, by demonstrating US interest, concern, and commitment, by assisting the forces of other nations to develop their own capabilities, and by providing a basis to move rapidly from peace to war. To accomplish these objectives, both in the near term and beyond, the US must have both active and reserve forces to provide the total warfighting capability.

Low Intensity Conflict. Total US conventional forces should have the capability to meet a broad range of Soviet-inspired and non-Soviet threats by:

- Supporting security assistance programs and providing foreign military training in support of the internal defense efforts of our friends and allies as they seek to shoulder the responsibilities for their own security.
- Providing appropriate support and support forces to supplement the military combat capabilities of friends and allies in their efforts at internal defense.
- Providing, if necessary, US combat forces to supplement the capabilities of indigenous forces when other means are ineffective, in the context of a statement of clear US political objectives and national will.
- Maintaining area-oriented special operations forces capable of supporting the internal defense of friendly countries.

US-Soviet Conflict. US conventional forces should have the capability for meeting the Soviet global threats by:

- Defeating Soviet aggression in many regions: Europe, Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, Latin America and the LOCs, with the priority by region to be determined by the extant situation.
- Putting the Soviet interests at risk, including those in the Soviet homeland.

TOP SECRET~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~TOP SECRET

2

- Seeking to terminate hostilities quickly and decisively on terms favorable to the United States. Where quick termination cannot be assured, the United States must confront adversaries with the prospect of a prolonged, widespread, costly, and ultimately unwinnable conflict. The US must have forces which are capable, after a prolonged conflict, of denying the Soviet Union or any other country the opportunity to coerce the US or allies or to dominate the post-war situation.

Policy Guidelines for Force ApplicationRegional Wartime Priorities

General Policies. Forces are and will remain insufficient for simultaneous operations in a global conflict with the Soviet Union. Therefore, the political and military situation at the time of war will bear heavily on strategic decisions, and the sequence of force employment may not necessarily be dictated by previously established priorities. Within this context, the following policies are applicable for both the near-term and mid-term.

It is in the interest of the US to limit the scope of any conflict with the Soviet Union.

Counteroffensives will be directed at places where the US can affect the outcome of the war. The United States should not consider counter-offensives in other areas as a substitute for robust military capabilities to protect vital interests at the point at which they are threatened.

Planning for Sequential Operations. US actions in other parts of the world will be designed to protect essential US interests, take advantage of Soviet vulnerabilities, and divert Soviet attention and forces from Europe and Southwest Asia. In the event of war with the Soviet Union originating in Europe, the need for sequential operations may limit the deployment of augmentation forces to Southwest Asia or to the Pacific. For war with the Soviet Union originating in the Pacific, forces available for augmentation to Europe or Southwest Asia would be reduced. For war with the Soviet Union originating in Southwest Asia, forces available for subsequent employment in Europe or the Pacific would be reduced. Supporting plans should exist for lesser scale operations in secondary theaters during a major war in a primary theater.

Regional Instability. Economic, religious, political, and ethnic instabilities in much of the world impinge directly on US interests and, at times, provide opportunities to the Soviet Union to project direct or indirect military power and influence to the affected locations. In this environment, and for the foreseeable future, the United States may be faced with the need to respond to crises or conflict in a single country or region in which there is no direct Soviet involvement.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~TOP SECRET

3

In responding to internal or intraregional conflict situations, the US will rely primarily upon indigenous forces to protect their own interests. At the same time, the planning process should not prejudge the direction of US support. Each set of circumstances will stand on its own merits.

For planning purposes, the actual commitment of US combat forces will be made, in any case, only when other means are ineffective, political objectives have been established, US political will has been made clear, and appropriate military capabilities are available.

Whether US support is to be security assistance, military support, US military presence, or introduction of US combat forces, US actions should be designed to supplement the military capabilities of the forces being helped.

Coalition Framework of US National Security Policy. As a nation with global interests, the US is particularly dependent upon the assistance of friends and allies. There is no doubt that successfully meeting the challenges to our interests will require stronger and more effective collective defense arrangements. Our strategic reserve of US-based forces cannot be deployed, employed or sustained without significant support from allies and friends. Therefore, it will be the policy of the United States to:

- Seek agreements to permit overflight and access to ports and airfields during peacetime and in time of crisis.
- Encourage the upgrading of selected allies and friendly facilities that might be used by US forces during crisis or war.
- Continue to secure host nation support agreements for forward deployed forces and those forces scheduled for deployment in the event of crisis and war.
- Urge our inter- and intraregional Allies and friends to join us in further developing a credible deterrent to aggression.
- Seek additional contributions from our NATO allies to improve the reinforcement capability of US-based combat and support forces.

US defense programs will consider the status of these coalition programs in the planning process.

Mobilization Policy. Reserve Component forces are an integral part of US capabilities. The reserves not only provide major combat forces that complement and reinforce active units, but they also provide the majority of the supporting forces required to sustain the total force in combat. Mobilization planning must allow adequate responses under

TOP SECRET~~TOP SECRET~~

TOP SECRET

4

conditions of ambiguous warning. These responses must be repeatable, sustainable, and able to achieve mobilized manpower objectives.

- Objectives. Existing Presidential callup authority or partial mobilization may be necessary in a conflict not involving the Soviets to provide sustaining forces for the conflict and to backfill essential capabilities normally required in the European theater. In a crisis with the Soviets and before initiation of hostilities, the US should consider full mobilization as a precautionary measure to deter conflict and protect vital interests. Any mobilization will include actions to prepare for total mobilization, if necessary. The initiation of conscription to meet personnel requirements must be an integral part of mobilization planning.
- Policies. Given the reliance our force structure places on reserve components, during crises involving the potential deployment and sustained employment of sizeable combat forces, an early mobilization decision will be provided by the National Command Authorities. Mobilization planning is an integral part of capability planning and as such is based upon the same policies and priorities as those used for force application and development.

STRATEGY

Peacetime

In peacetime, US military strategy for general purpose forces is designed to support our overall national security strategy by the peacetime application of military power. In the broadest terms, we seek to achieve two fundamental objectives: first, to deter military attack against the United States, its allies and friends; and second, to contain and reverse the expansion of Soviet influence worldwide. Both of these objectives require the United States to increase its influence worldwide.

Forward deployments, rapidly deployable US-based military forces, assistance and special operations, and the demonstration of our rapid deployment capability through periodic exercises serve both objectives. These components, taken together, comprise our peacetime military strategy.

Forward Deployments. Current US forward-deployed forces will be maintained in peacetime to provide a capability for timely and flexible response to contingencies and to demonstrate resolve to honor US commitments. US forward-deployed force presence will be postured to facilitate the transition from peacetime to wartime posture, to foster military and non-military relations, to demonstrate US power and interest, and to assist in the retention of US rights, authorizations, and facilities abroad.

TOP SECRET**TOP SECRET**

TOP SECRET
SECRET

TOP SECRET

5

US ground, naval, and air forces will remain deployed overseas in Europe, in the Western Pacific, in Southwest Asia, and in Panama. Naval forces will maintain a presence with combatant forces in the North Atlantic, the Caribbean Basin, the Mediterranean, the Western Pacific, and the Indian Ocean/Southwest Asia regions.

Intermittent deployments will be made to waters contiguous to Latin America, Africa, and Southwest Pacific. Ground and air deployments will be made periodically to Southwest Asia as political considerations permit. US naval, air, and ground forces may also deploy to other selected areas worldwide on a periodic basis.

Flexible Forces/Rapid Deployment. The US will maintain a strategic reserve of US-based forces which can rapidly deploy where necessary to protect interests worldwide.

Assistance and Special Operations. In peacetime, the US may provide military support to forces of other countries. Assistance may also be appropriate to resistance forces within some countries in which the Soviet Union or its proxies have achieved some degree of control. The US should provide assistance with a minimum of delay or dislocation of US units. Moreover, the US should be able to use the assets of DOD and other agencies to conduct special operations to support friendly governments and resistance movements.

Assistance programs should include the expansion of US foreign military training. This will assist indigenous friends and allies to defeat insurgencies, to maintain stability, and to reduce diversion of US military capabilities.

The US should take steps to strengthen US security assistance programs to provide Third World friends and allies with the means to meet subversion and surrogate conventional threats, thereby reducing diversion of US military capabilities and precluding Soviet extension into critical strategic locations.

Exercises. The rapid deployment capability of US combat forces to regions where the US has essential interests will be periodically demonstrated. Where possible, these exercises will include Allied and friendly participation.

Wartime

Current general purpose forces are adequate to maintain most peacetime forward deployments and to respond to minor crises and non-Soviet conflicts. There are, however, attendant strains on manpower and readiness to maintain these capabilities. These forces currently contribute to deterring direct aggression in Europe, Southwest Asia, or Northeast Asia.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRETTOP SECRET

6

Because of the continuing increases in Soviet conventional force capabilities, major risk would confront US forces if they should become engaged in direct conflict with Soviet forces in any of those theaters. Current general purpose forces are not adequate to assure success in the event of simultaneous conflict with the Soviets in more than one theater.

Strategy Guidelines

Conventional Conflict Not Involving the USSR. The United States will seek to limit the scope of the conflict, avoid involvement of the USSR, quickly end US military involvement, and ensure that US military objectives are met. A partial mobilization may be necessary to provide reinforcements and sustaining capability and to backfill those capabilities normally assigned an early NATO role.

Threatened regional allies must provide combat forces to the extent of their capabilities. US forces will provide air, naval, logistic, and advisory support. If necessary, US ground combat troops could be deployed.

Depending on the nature of the conflict, US combat force participation may involve a demonstration of force, protection of US lives or critical resources, interposition between contending parties, or direct combat.

Direct US military involvement should cease when the threatened ally is able to conduct successful operations without assistance. Logistic support will continue until the threatened ally can end the conflict on favorable terms.

Conventional Conflict Involving the USSR. While US allies are expected to contribute to the defense of their own interests, US forces will be employed to limit or counteract Soviet involvement. Before or upon initiation of direct US-Soviet hostilities, the United States will take precautionary actions worldwide to protect its vital interests from Soviet counter-escalatory threats and will undertake mobilization steps, preparing for total mobilization if necessary. If deterrence fails, US military strategy is to:

- Deploy military forces rapidly to the area to signal US commitment and to deter further aggression.
- Failing to deter further aggression, conduct military operations in conjunction with regional allies with the aim of halting Soviet aggression.
- Take those steps necessary to prepare for the possibility of a global US-Soviet conflict and, if necessary, execute counteroffensives at other fronts or places where we can affect the outcome of the war.

TOP SECRETTOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

7

Near-Term Shortfalls. Current forces are generally adequate to execute the strategy described above for the non-Soviet case. US military strategy envisions that a war with the Soviet Union may be global in nature and possibly protracted. The strategy is intended to limit a United States-Soviet confrontation to conventional warfare, while maintaining appropriate nuclear and chemical deterrents.

Because there is a serious disparity between Soviet conventional forces and US conventional forces, the United States does not now possess a credible capability to achieve all military objectives simultaneously. Thus, in the near term, execution of the strategy involves a considerable degree of risk.

The inability to simultaneously employ sufficient force in Europe, Southwest Asia, and essential lines of communication will likely require the United States to choose between geographic escalation, nuclear escalation, or an unacceptable outcome in a vital theater. Use of nuclear weapons in any theater must, however, take into account the fact that the Soviet Union has theater nuclear advantages. Moreover, in a multi-theater war there is no way to be sure that the enemy will restrict any retaliatory use of non-strategic nuclear forces to the theater in which we initiate their use.

Mid-Term Shortfalls. The political and military situation at the time of war will continue to dictate strategy decisions. Continued real growth will permit some force expansion as programmed forces achieve desired readiness, sustainability, and modernization levels. These improvements will enhance the likelihood of being able to achieve wartime objectives in one theater.

However, the execution of our wartime strategy in a global conflict against the Soviet Union will still be characterized by difficult choices among theaters. We will remain unable to meet the requirement for simultaneous global operations.

FORCE DEVELOPMENT

Given the Soviet threat, there is a substantial risk that current force capabilities are insufficient to attain the military objectives enunciated in this section. Notwithstanding substantial improvements over the course of the next five years, US military forces will remain unable to carry out fully US wartime military strategy.

The most significant factor contributing to this reality is the need to devote the bulk of available resources to assure the responsiveness and fighting capabilities of existing forces. On the one hand, we must maintain a credible deterrent today; on the other hand, we cannot assume that there will not be a war in the near term. At the same time, defense programs must also achieve balanced force improvements if we are to close the gap between strategy and capabilities.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRETTOP SECRET

8

The priorities for force development which follow are intended to provide broad guidance for the difficult decisions in resource allocation necessary in a fiscally constrained environment. The operational capabilities (e.g., readiness, sustainability, etc.) which must be enhanced are those subelements of total military capability in which emphasis must be placed to reduce risk. They should not be regarded as discrete categories which are mutually exclusive. Indeed, they overlap in an often complex and not readily identifiable manner. For example, the procurement of repair parts contributes directly to both readiness and sustainability. The priorities which follow take into account these interrelationships.

Priorities for Existing and Programmed Forces

First priority is to improve the operational capabilities of forward deployed forces, forces providing flexibility in deployment, such as the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF), other units earmarked for earliest deployment, and their associated lift forces.

Second priority will be improving the operational capabilities of those US-based forces not earmarked for earliest deployments.

Third priority will be expanding force structure.

Priorities for Operational Capabilities Improvement. Force capabilities will be improved in the following general order of priority:

- Achieving necessary readiness. US forces must be prepared for war at any time. Since the warning time we can safely assume is shorter than the lead times needed to correct readiness deficiencies, it is necessary that we maintain high peacetime readiness. Moreover, warning is likely to be ambiguous, requiring responses that can be repeated and sustained until the ambiguity is resolved. Readiness and the perception of it enhance deterrence as well as being critical in responding successfully.
- Upgrading C³. Given their essentiality, command/control/communications systems should be selectively improved, the survivability of critical nodes enhanced, and operational procedures rigorously exercised.
- Providing adequate sustainability. Given the expectation of short warning, provisions for sustainability must be made in advance. We cannot foretell the duration of any conflict, but the goal is to ensure support of the forces from the initiation to the end of the hostilities, and hence, in the mid-term, to be at least equivalent to the sustainability of the forces of the Soviet Union and its allies.

TOP SECRET**TOP SECRET**

TOP SECRET

9

- Ideally, we should have sufficient stocks on hand to sustain the forces until such time as defense production could support our wartime demand rates. In most cases, we do not have this capability and, given the projected funding availability, it is unlikely to be attained in the mid-term. Therefore, sustainability improvement programs will focus on raising stockage levels, expanding industrial preparedness, and restarting or maintaining production capabilities in the industrial base.
- Increasing mobility capability. Inter- and intra-theater mobility should be increased until balanced with the required deployment schedule of current forces.
- Maintaining essential modernization. Investment (R&D plus procurement) in systems for all forces should provide for acquisition to preclude a decline in force capability in the FY 84-88 or FY 89-95 period (except where policy or other changes are made).

Force Structure. Modern warfare requires force structure that is balanced between combat and support forces and among all essential combat arms. Currently, large portions of our combat forces cannot be brought to bear on an enemy in a timely enough manner nor sustained in combat. Increased capabilities to deploy forces, protect the LOCs, control the seas, and seize ports are necessary to enhance responsiveness and the flexibility of current land, air, and amphibious forces. Thus, striking a better balance in our current force capabilities to meet global objectives requires expansion as well as improvements in naval, mobility, tactical air, and sustaining support forces. Consideration should also be given to land force expansion.

Chemical Warfare. In view of the overall military balance between the US and the Soviets, we cannot rely on other components of our military capabilities to deter chemical warfare. The US has been unable to eliminate the chemical threat through negotiations or unilateral US restraint. Consequently, to deter, the US needs to improve its defensive and retaliatory CW capabilities sufficiently to deny the Soviets the significant military advantage they would gain from using chemical weapons.

The objective for the retaliatory element is to maintain the safest, smallest chemical munitions stockpile that denies a significant military advantage to any initiator of CW. Therefore, US forces will continue modernization initiatives for the production of binary chemical munitions to achieve and maintain a credible deterrent.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET